

# **Excellence in the Provision for Special and Additional Educational Needs**

## **Briefing for Headteachers – Autumn Term 2004**

### **Summary**

This paper informs the discussions with Headteachers of mainstream schools regarding the proposed reorganisation of SEN provision and the establishment of SEN partnerships at an area level.

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Best Value Review Programme 2001–2002 ‘Services to Support Individual Pupils, Children with Disabilities and their Families’ and the subsequent document ‘Inclusion and Raising Standards for All Children’ (2002) established a framework for the development of services for children with special or additional educational needs in Norfolk.
- 1.2 The Government has set out a challenging vision for the future of SEN in ‘Removing Barriers to Achievement’ and in June 2004 a joint letter from Baroness Ashton and Sir Jeremy Beecham was sent to all LEAs emphasising the key issues to be addressed.
- 1.3 The Every Child Matters Team are currently preparing a series of options on the organisation of services for consideration by Members. It is essential that new plans for local SEN provision are congruent with these important developments.
- 1.4 In Norfolk, various strands of work are currently being undertaken looking at the role and function of mainstream-based Learning Support Centres, the ‘mechanism’ for access to specialist support from the School Support Team, the future role of Special Schools, the collection and collation of data and a review of the mainstream funding mechanism for SEN.
- 1.5 The Special Schools Development Group held a Modelling Conference in July 2004 at which the attendees contributed to the development of a new vision of a centre of excellence in SEN. A follow up conference will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2004.

### **2. Principles**

During the Spring Term, in addition to the Modelling Conference, a range of activities were undertaken. These included: detailed consideration of Removing Barriers to Achievement, meetings with a wide range of staff

from mainstream schools, special schools, LEA specialist teams (PASS), and other stakeholders, visits to schools and learning support centres, mapping exercises and an analysis of Norfolk SEN data. Consideration of the issues raised from these activities has led to the formulation of the following principles to guide the development of provision.

- 2.1 ***“All children have the right to a good education and the opportunity to fulfil their potential. All teachers should expect to teach children with special educational needs (SEN) and all schools should play their part in educating children from their local community, whatever their background or ability.”***  
Removing Barriers to Achievement, DfES (2004)
- 2.2 There will be equality of access to provision and support across the LEA
- 2.3 Pupils will be educated in the most inclusive environment appropriate to their needs and wherever possible within their locality
- 2.4 The process by which all resources are allocated will be open and transparent
- 2.5 Ownership and accountability will be promoted by devolving to the lowest effective level resources to meet the needs of pupils in a flexible manner based upon the most efficient use of resources
- 2.6 There will be a co-ordinated continuum of specialist provision encompassing multi-agency working

### **3. Proposed Model**

Following the conference it was agreed that a brief paper setting out a possible model for the Special Schools Development Group would be developed to stimulate further discussion. The key features of this model are:

- 3.1 Special Schools would be redesignated ‘Complex Needs’ Schools. The LEA would retain at least one EBD school, which may develop outreach support / withdrawal centres in each local area.
- 3.2 Specialist provision would be organised at an area level with a maximum of resources devolved to this level.
- 3.3 The resources at an area level would be collectively known as the SEN Partnership. The SEN Partnership would have responsibility for planning at an area level including the allocation and monitoring of resources to meet, where possible, the needs of children locally. The resources would include: the complex needs school(s), the learning support centre(s), pupil referral units, specialist outreach services and mainstream schools.

- 3.4 The local area SEN Partnership would have an area management group which would include: the Headteacher(s) of the complex needs school(s), representative Headteachers of mainstream schools, Area Senior Educational Psychologist, Area Attendance and Behaviour Officer and the Pupil Entitlement Support Officer.
- 3.5 To ensure a continuum of provision, the Complex Needs School would have stronger links with the Learning Support Centre(s).
- 3.6 The number and location of Complex Needs Schools, Learning Support Centres and specialist outreach services would reflect the needs of each local area.
- 3.7 Some mainstream schools would develop particular specialisms in supporting pupils with more complex needs through the funding of 'resourced centres or bases'. An example would be resource bases for Autistic Spectrum Disorders. In such bases, these pupils able to attend mainstream school but requiring additional specialist on-site support could have access to specialist trained teachers and learning support assistants and other resources as required.
- 3.8 There would be a clear understanding regarding the respective responsibilities of schools and the LEA at the various stages of the SEN Code of Practice.

#### 4. Timescales

5.1	Review of the initial model by the Special Schools Development Group	23/09/04
5.2	Review of the model following feedback	30/09/04
5.3	Discussion with Special School Governors	11/10/04
5.4	Meetings with School Support Teams and other LEA core staff	15/10/04
5.5	Visits to all Learning Support Centres completed	29/10/04
5.6	Meetings with Learning Support Centre staff in each area	10/11/04
5.7	PASS Autumn Term Area Briefings	Autumn Term
5.8	Autumn Term 2004 Meetings for Headteachers with Director of Education	05/10/04
5.9	Autumn Term 2004 Meetings for Headteachers with Director of Education	12/10/04
5.10	Autumn Term 2004 Meetings for Headteachers with Director of Education	13/10/04
5.11	Autumn Term 2004 Meetings for Headteachers with Director of Education	09/11/04
5.12	Autumn Term 2004 Meetings for Headteachers with Director of Education	18/11/04
5.13	Autumn Term 2004 Meetings for Headteachers with Director of Education	30/11/04
5.14	SNAPP Meeting	10/11/04
5.15	NASSH Meeting	23/11/04
5.16	Inclusion and Equality Partnership Forum	18/11/04
5.17	JCC Meeting	23/11/04
5.18	Conference to agree 'principles' and establish vision with Mainstream and Special Headteachers, Elected Members and Services / Agencies	03/12/04
5.19	Paper setting out progress to the Education and Cultural Services Review Panel (to be confirmed)	Jan 2005
5.20	Formal Consultations begin	Feb 2005